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teenth century, and the collaborators in the fourth volume have proved worthy of their period. The poets are discussed by the editor; Bourciez takes the *précieuses*, whose importance is often gravely underestimated; the foundation of the academy and its significance falls to the editor; and the drama, which, for sociological reasons that it is impossible to suggest here, was sure to be the highest mode of the literary expression of this age, is divided between Rigal, Lemaitre, and Reynier. Morillot shows himself, as always, at home in the evolution of fiction, Bourgeois has treated memoirs and history, and the philosophers are shared between Gazier, Hannequin, and Thamin.

Every man has dealt with his specialty, every author has received the careful criticism of a specialist. Yet the book is not an aggregation of essays. It is more than any one man could have attained in a lifetime of study, but it has been in the power of the editor to coordinate the work of his helpers, so that not only is there no repetition, but there is harmony and proportion throughout. We have here what the French seem to know so much better how to give than their neighbors of England or Germany: a book that is at once a storehouse of facts and a pleasure to the reader.

B. W. W.

MR. BRANDER MATTHEWS' NEW STORIES.

OUTLINES IN LOCAL COLOR. By Brander Matthews. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1898. 12mo, pp. 240.

Mr. Brander Matthews' latest volume of short stories seems to me not only to be the best work he has yet done in fiction, but also to be something he and his many friends may well be proud of. It is in New York, of course, the city that he knows and loves, that the scenes of his twelve stories are laid; but he has never before, in my judgment, caught so well the atmosphere of the metropolis, never before reproduced so faithfully its infinite discords and harmonies, never before so unerringly described the physiognomies and movements

and hidden springs of action of the men and women that inhabit it. And yet the "Vignettes of Manhattan" and "His Father's Son" seemed to me, when I read them, to be excellent books and to represent very well what could be made of New York life by a conscientious writer using Mr. Matthews' restrained, artistic methods in black and white. I was simply mistaken, that was all—a fact of experience in matters critical to which I grow more accustomed as the years go by. I had underrated both the artistic method and Mr. Matthews' capacity for growth; I had belonged to that portion of his friends that prefers his work in criticism to his work in fiction; but this last volume of stories has induced me to pack up my critical baggage and betake myself to the other camp, where I propose hereafter to do as good service as I can against the enemy—to wit, the philistine public. This is not to say, of course, that I shall not steal back when I may to my old camp and fire a shot or two in defense of his criticism; but I shall not tarry long, for he can himself direct the manning of the breaches in this quarter of the field, and would, I should think, prefer to have new volunteers where the fighting is likely to be thickest. For fear, however, lest the reader may infer from the military figure I am cutting—no, using; for one doesn't cut rhetorical figures, unless possibly when they are ludicrous, which I trust mine isn't—that I intend to write a story myself, instead of criticizing those of Mr. Matthews, I shall now endeavor to tell as simply and clearly as I can why I like his last book so well.

In the first place, Mr. Matthews, like Mr. Crawford and other modern novelists, is following the example set by Balzac of interweaving the characters of his stories, with the result that the reader gets a sense of moving about in a world of larger dimensions than that included in a single story or novel. Elsewhere I have tried to show how much of Balzac's transcendent success was due to this artistic device; here I must content myself with pointing out that Mr. Matthews, by using again and again certain characters like Miss Marlenspuyk, Miss Peters, and Mrs. Jimmy Suydam, is ma-

king a certain social set of the metropolis live for us in a very real and tangible way. He has but to extend the use of this device to his male characters and to the middle and lower classes in order to earn for himself the enviable title of *the* novelist of New York. This title can, I am sure, be secured by no one who does not make up his mind to follow Balzac resolutely; but such following implies no more discredit than attaches to Cooper for making use of the methods of Scott. Scott had his world; Cooper, his. Balzac had Paris and France; let Mr. Matthews determine to have New York. All America is as yet a possible province for no one, but Greater New York is large enough for even a prince of novelists.

In the second place, Mr. Matthews avoids with complete success a besetting sin of most of our novelists: the sin of perpetrating journalism instead of fiction on the public, of writing like a reporter instead of like an artist. This reportorial quality of our fiction is natural enough when we consider that an American is normally a person who, to use a familiar expression, struggles to "get there," and that a reporter is emphatically a person that both "gets there" himself and "gets others there." The novel-reading public likes to be "got there," and the reporter-novelist is ready to perform this service for them by making items and using display type. It is needless to say that the methods of the artist differ from those of the reporter *toto callo*. The stories of an artist never strike one as having been material for copy. If he uses black and white, one is not reminded of a daily newspaper; nor, if he uses colors, of a Sunday issue. In other words, the true artist is not vulgar, no matter how low the life may be that he has to describe. He is not a cad, either, and is just the reverse of the Rupert de Ruyter of Mr. Matthews' clever sketch entitled "A Candle in the Plate," for whose portrait, it is superfluous to remark, our versatile novelist did not sit to himself. I wonder what popular writer was the unconscious poser.

Finally, Mr. Matthews shows with each succeeding vol-

ume a growing faculty of exact observation, a subtler psychology, and a deeper insight into the workings both of the tragedy and of the comedy of life. His story entitled "In the Watches of the Night" has more true tragedy in it than anything I have read lately, and it is to be noted that neither here nor elsewhere does Mr. Matthews permit himself to fall into that quagmire in which most modern writers of fiction are floundering hopelessly: the slough of the hyperpathetic. Genuine comedy, too, is well represented in such a story as "A Spring Flood on Broadway." Lovers of the mime and idyl also will find something to interest them in more than one story of this volume; and if one wants fearless realism, one has but to read "A Glimpse of the Under World." In fine, Mr. Matthews has given us in his latest collection convincing proof not only of his versatility and general power as a writer of fiction, but also of the fact that if he does not work this special vein of his genius he will fail to discharge his duty to himself and to the public. W. P. T.

A STORY OF LOVE.

Such is the title that M. Paul Mariéton has chosen for his recent book (Harvard, Paris) on the romantic affections, the struggles, tortures, and final separation of George Sand and Alfred de Musset; but his book is only one of many volumes and articles that have testified during the past year to the perennial interest of this tale of passion that has been pursued by some of our modern scavengers of literature with an earnestness that is much less sympathetic than that which it describes. Of all these various "true stories," "veritable histories," and the like, the last that has reached us seems to bear most traces of calmness; and perhaps it is not too much to hope, with M. Rocheblave, that we have here in his introduction to the letters of George Sand to Alfred de Musset and Sainte-Beuve (Lévy, Paris) what will prove "the end of